

Message Text

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PAGE 01 TEGUCI 04305 081501Z
ACTION ARA-15

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 IO-13 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-05 H-01
INR-10 L-03 NSAE-00 NSC-05 PA-01 SP-02 SS-15
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R 081402Z SEP 78
FM AMEMBASSY TEGUCIGALPA
TO SECSTATE WASHDC 1485
INFO AMEMBASSY GUATEMALA
AMEMBASSY MANAGUA
AMEMBASSY SAN JOSE
AMEMBASSY SAN SALVADOR
USCINCSO

C O N F I D E N T I A L TEGUCIGALPA 4305

E.O. 11652: GDS
TAGS: PEPR, PBOR, HO, ES
SUBJ: HONDURAS-EL SALVADOR BORDER DISPUTE: FONMIN PORTH'S REMARKS

REF: SAN SALVADOR 4691

1. SALVADORAN FOREIGN MINISTER JOSE RODRIGUEZ PORTH ADDRESS (REFTEL) HAS BEEN WIDELY REPORTED BY HONDURAN RADIO AND PRESS. REACTION HAS BEEN UNIFORMLY TO CRITICIZE WHAT HONDURANS VIEW AS DISTORTION OF HISTORY. ONE EDITORIAL COMMENT ASKS: IF SALVADOR IS SO SURE OF ITS POSITION, WHY WILL IT NOT ACCEPT BINDING ARBITRATION?
2. RESPONSIBLE SOURCES HAVE EMPHASIZED PORTH'S STATEMENTS WERE INTENDED FOR DOMESTIC CONSUMPTION AND THAT THEY WILL NOT IMPEDE THE MEDIATION PROCESS. HONDURAN FOREIGN MINISTER PALMA GALVEZ DOWNPLAYED BOTH RODRIGUEZ' COMMENTS (IN EFFECT SHRUGGING HIS SHOULDERS SAYING THEY CLAIM 400 SQUARE KILOMETERS ARE THEIRS, WE CLAIM THE SAME THING, WHICH IS WHAT THE NEGOTIATIONS ARE ABOUT) AND THEIR EFFECT ON THE MEDIATION PROCESS.

CONFIDENTIAL

PAGE 02 TEGUCI 04305 081501Z

PALMA SPECIFICALLY NOTED, HOWEVER, THAT BORDER DELINEATION, OR ITS LACK, WAS ONE OF THE CAUSES OF THE 1969 WAR.

3. COMMENT: HONDURAN REACTION TO THE SPEECH WILL PROBABLY BLOW OVER IN SEVERAL DAYS, BUT DOES ILLUSTRATE HOW QUICKLY PUBLIC INTEREST CAN BE ENGAGED, ESPECIALLY WITH THE MEDIA PLAYING THE ISSUE FOR NATIONALISTIC REACTIONS (JUST AS IT DID IN 1969,

CONTRIBUTING ITS PART TO BRINGING THE WAR ABOUT). IN SPITE OF
PALMA'S REFUSING TO BE DRAWN INTO A DEBATE, THE INCIDENT WILL
SERVE TO REINFORCE HONDURAN SUSPICIONS THAT EL SALVADOR HAS
NO REAL INTENTION TO RESOLVE THE ISSUE AT AN EARLY DATE.
JARAMILLO

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Message Attributes

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Draft Date: 08 sep 1978
Decaption Date: 01 jan 1960
Decaption Note:
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Disposition Approved on Date:
Disposition Case Number: n/a
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